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Resilient planning for sporting mega-events: designing and managing safe and secure urban places for London 2012 and beyond

Planejamento resiliente para megaeventos esportivos: planejando e gerindo lugares seguros para Londres 2012 e além

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Abstract

Since the 1960s both regeneration and security have been prominent themes in Olympic planning. However, this paper argues that the prominence given to post event “legacies” in London’s bid to host the 2012 Summer Games has fomented a merger of these hitherto distinct ambitions oriented around notions of “resilience”. In addition to identifying this merger, based on analysis of planning for the 2012 Games the paper sets out its component features and considers a range of key implications. These include the accommodation of Olympic security amid shifting national security arrangements and, at a local level, the impact and importance of the 2011 London riots on Olympic safety and security processes. Organised over four areas of discussion – the first three comprising of the coupling of spatial strategies of resilient planning and design with concerns for security; the temporal framework of such approaches; analysis of the altered physical and institutional landscape of London ahead of the 2012 Olympic Games – the paper concludes by identifying and discussing the ways in which urban rejuvenation and securitisation which are increasingly being combined into resilient designs and master plans in the Olympic context and, crucially, standardised, exported and transferred to new urban hosts of similar events.

Keywords: Mega-event. Security. Resilience. Urban change.

Resumo

Desde a década de 1960, regeneração e segurança têm sido temas proeminentes no planejamento olímpico. Entretanto, este artigo argumenta que a evidência dada para o “legado” pós-evento na candidatura de Londres para os Jogos Olímpicos de 2012 proporcionou uma fusão dessas duas, até então, distintas ambições orientadas a partir de noções de “resiliência”. Além de identificar essa fusão, baseada na análise do planejamento para os jogos de 2012, o artigo descreve suas principais características e considera uma variedade de implicações-chave. Isso inclui a aceitação da segurança olímpica em função de mudanças de arranjos nacionais de segurança e, em



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âmbito local, o impacto e a importância dos protestos de 2011 em Londres para a segurança olímpica e para processos de segurança. O artigo é organizado em quatro áreas de discussão. As três primeiras estão ligadas a estratégias espaciais de planejamento resiliente e design com preocupações de segurança; ao recorte temporal dessas abordagens; e à análise de ambientes físicos e institucionais modificados em Londres em circunstância dos Jogos Olímpicos de 2012. O trabalho conclui com a identificação e a discussão sobre os modos como o rejuvenescimento e a securitização urbana (que têm sido combinados cada vez mais com designs e planos diretores resilientes no contexto dos jogos, significativamente padronizados) têm sido exportados e transferidos para novas sedes urbanas de eventos semelhantes.

Palavras-chave: *Megaevento. Segurança. Resiliência. Transformação urbana.*

Introduction

Since the Second World War a core part of the mega-event experience, and its legacy for the host city, has been the ability to stimulate large-scale redevelopment through transformational regeneration schemes (COAFFEE, 2007; GOLD; GOLD, 2010). Within the context of the Summer Olympics such redevelopment is seen as a key rationale for cities to be awarded the Games by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) with the event seen to offer an unparalleled shop window for inward investment and private sector land development (COAFFEE, 2010a; ESSEX; CHALKLEY, 1998; OLDS, 1998; TUFTS, 2001; BURBANK et al., 2001; SEARLE, 2002). Combined with this regeneration rhetoric, safety and security, and the management of incivility, have become key leitmotifs of the Olympic experience and bidding process (FUSSEY; COAFFEE, 2011; BENNETT; HAGGERTY, 2011). Often in Olympic history this search for safety has resulted in large scale and punitive policing methods being deployed and the eviction or removal of “offending” groups or unwanted activities that do not fit with the planned – or contrived – vision for the Olympic city (FUSSEY et al., 2011). Moreover, concerns for security, resulting from the fear of international terrorist attack at international mega-events, such as the Olympics, and against the associated crowded places and critical infrastructure of the host city, has meant that principles of resilience – from the Latin *resilire*, “to leap back” – are increasingly designed into the built environment and embedded within the behaviours and practices of those responsible for construction and securing of the Olympic venues and sites (COAFFEE, 2010b).

This paper undertakes an analysis of this context, generally, of the parallel mega-event processes of urban regeneration and urban securitisation, specifically, and is organised over four broad areas of discussion. The first section will briefly highlight how these dual regenerative and securitising processes have been coupled in spatial strategies of resilient planning and design, highlighting how Olympic-led redevelopment is being tempered, and in some cases fundamentally reconfigured, by concerns for security. The second section combines this spatial perspective with a temporal framework, noting how various urban space interventions are differentially deployed before, during and after mega-events have “left town”. To exemplify these sets of processes, the third section explores how the physical and institutional landscape of London is being indelibly altered in response to both the needs of regeneration *and* security associated with the 2012 Olympic Games. In this section we highlight how the connections between security and regeneration are fluid, especially in the period immediately before the mega-event and have altered in response to changing dynamics of security threats and of civil disobedience (and associated policy changes), fiscal retrenchment, and the changing face of the security governance put in place for London 2012. The final section of the paper will reflect upon the London experience to date, and relate this to security preparations for other mega sporting event, notably the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow and the subsequent 2016 summer Olympics being held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In so doing we will seek to illuminate potential policy transference for mega-event organisers who are tasked with providing a tangible regeneration legacy in the face of a perceived

growth of security threats. We will also note how the widespread regeneration-linked securitization associated with London 2012 both reproduces and generates a number of precedents for future models of Olympic security and urban redevelopment.

Towards the resilient design of Olympic cities

The response of urban authorities to embedding safety and security into Olympic-led regeneration projects is now increasingly being referred to through ideas of “resilience”. In this sense, resilience is both physical and organisational. It encompasses both physical design initiatives and strategic spatial planning intervention, as well as a restructuring of governance and management functions in response to an array of potentially disruptive challenges (COAFFEE, 2006). As such, a resilient built environment should be

designed, located, built, operated and maintained in a way that maximises the ability of built assets, associated support systems (physical and institutional) and the people that reside or work within the built assets, to withstand, recover from, and mitigate for the impacts of extreme natural and human-induced hazards (DAINTY; BOSHER, 2008, p. 357).

Commonly, however, such urban resilience processes, especially those associated with countering the terrorist threats that often foreshadow mega-events, military security perspectives are bound up with neoliberal agendas connected directly to the redevelopment of the city (ATKINSON; HELMS, 2007). Here the search for urban security and resilience exists within a climate of regional, national and global competition between cities for footloose capital, company relocation, cultural assets and visitors (COAFFEE; MURAKAMI WOOD, 2006), building on the existing processes of the competitive entrepreneurial city (*inter alia* HARVEY, 1989). Moreover, at the local level within the planning system, built environment professionals are increasingly being made responsible for safety in public spaces through design intervention intended for crime prevention and the control of human behaviour (RACO, 2007, p. 50). This has led to accusation that the new urban spaces

created, often as a result of mega-event-led construction, are not “open” to all (COAFFEE, 2007) and that the aim of urban authorities is often to “spatially purify” (SIBLEY, 1995) such spaces for particular user demographics (ROGERS; COAFFEE, 2005).

In the case of mega-events, such as the summer Olympics, spectators, consumers, tourists and would-be residents of the regenerated host neighbourhoods are the commonly targeted groups with other potential users of space often excluded or ejected. For example, commentators have noted how, before the 2000 Sydney Games, permitted activities in public spaces were restricted and a systematic “street sweeping” occurred in the host city, made possible by special legislation that gave the police “exceptional” powers to “move on” those who were causing “inconvenience” (SAUL, 2000, p. 35 apud FUSSEY et al., 2011). In more extreme cases related to Olympic-led redevelopment, it has been reported that over a million people suffered forced evictions in relation to the urban redevelopment preceding the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Here it has been alleged that the Korean government ordered the demolition of slum housing visible from main roads and major hotels (Asian Coalition for HOUSING RIGHTS, 1989 apud LENSKEY, 2004). It has been argued that these practices have been repeated in subsequent host cities. Such initiatives range from the concealment of “undesirable” areas from the gaze of visitors (evinced in Atlanta, 1996, and London, 2012 and, also the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa) to, perhaps most notably, (government denied) reports of at least 300,000 evictions in Beijing during the run-up to the 2008 Games (ARCHAYA, 2005 apud COOK, 2007).

Techniques of security and resilient planning

Linked to the above discussion, in recent years concepts and practices of urban resilience have been increasingly utilised by planners and other built environment professionals in attempts to create safer places. It has been argued that resilience has become a core concern in professional planning and design practice as attempts have been made to make the built environment increasingly resistant to external risk from natural hazards, crime or from new security challenges orientated around the perceived threat of terrorism (COAFFEE; O'HARE, 2008). Such

processes have served to draw neo-liberal planning agendas and their attendant security-focused ambitions towards the heart of new regeneration schemes. The on-going regeneration of central urban areas in many cities in the last decade and renewal schemes associated with mega-event-led upgrading, have given many opportunities to apply such resilient practices to the design and construction of new buildings and public spaces, facilitated by changes in building regulations and codes, and the planning system more broadly (COAFFEE; BOSHER, 2008). Indeed, mega-events such as the Olympics, provide an unparalleled opportunity for a host city to redevelop previously under-utilised or disused land. However, such mega-events, and the newly beautified spaces of associated developments, are also subject to the competing trend of being an increasingly attractive target for an array of local, national and international terrorist groups (RICHARDS; FUSSEY; SILKE, 2010).

Since the 1970s, and after the terrorist attacks at the 1972 Summer Olympics, security planning considerations have become an integral and requisite part of bidding documents, processes and preparation for hosting such sporting mega-events. The cost and sophistication of undertaking such planning has advanced steeply in the last decade (COAFFEE, 2007). Utilising recent work in urban resilience which has developed in the wake of 9/11 to focus on embedding the ability to “bounce back” into planning systems and emergency management procedures, (COAFFEE; BOSHER, 2008) we can identify a number of separate interventions that have been, and continue to be, collectively used to enhance the safety, security, and ultimately the ability of cities, and their associated social, economic and institutional systems to cope and respond in an event of a disaster or attack. These are measures that are only now beginning to be embedded within regeneration and urban development schemes associated with mega-events and transferred across time and place.

These urban security measures typically relate to technological, territorial, design and governance interventions which have become prominent in policy debates as cities are increasingly scrutinised through the lens of “resilience”. We can categorize four such interventions:

Firstly, the growth of electronic surveillance within public and semi-public urban spaces, in particular automated software-driven systems that can track

people and vehicles across the urban terrain (LYON, 2003; FUSSEY, 2007). *Secondly*, the increased popularity of physical or symbolic notions of the boundary and territorial closure which serve a defensive purpose, often through the erection of reinforced security barriers and bollards around “at risk” sites (BENTON-SHORT, 2007). *Thirdly*, the increasing sophistication and cost of security and contingency planning undertaken by organisations and different levels of government, intended to decrease their vulnerability to attack and increase preparedness in the event of an attack (COAFFEE, 2006) in addition to providing a number of reassuring and symbolic functions (BOYLE; HAGGERTY, 2009). *Fourthly*, the way that resilience has been embedded within the urban context through carefully crafted urban design interventions which focus upon the construction, remodelling and management of public spaces, taking into account issues such as public access, socio-cultural preferences, the structural robustness of building materials and heritage concerns (NÉMETH; SCHMIDT, 2007).

Temporalities of the mega-event

Although the types of interventions mentioned above have obvious spatial and institutional imprints, where mega-events differ from other forms of security or “target” risk is in the different temporalities that make up the “event”. In the case of Olympic security planning we can usefully distinguish between three interlinked stages where different activities occur and which serve to shape the built environment and its management in a myriad of connected ways. Initially we can discern the *pre-event or pre-planning* stage. This involves technically scrutinising and designing-out weaknesses and vulnerabilities well in advance of the event. Increasingly this is taking the form of permanent design alternation to the built fabric of the city. As the event draws ever nearer the intensity of such security preparations becomes more pronounced. Here the pre-existing security regime in the host city will mediate what is deemed necessary. *During the event* particular types of largely temporary security measures are deployed which commonly attempt to utilise what the police and security services refer to as “island security” to physically “lockdown” key venues through

barrier methods of physical security, and the use of advanced surveillance equipment to screen spectators and collect data from across the full-spectrum of the venue environment. After the event, there is also an increasing trend emerging regarding the *post-event* retention of security features, be they CCTV networks, or security conscious building design or cultures of policing and emergency response (FUSSEY et al., 2011). This three-fold phasing of security and resilience planning will be discussed in the next section in relation to the forthcoming 2012 Olympics in London.

Planning a resilient London for 2012

In May 2003, announcing the UK's intention to put London forward as a host for the 2012 Summer Olympics, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pointed to the regenerative potential of the Games, noting that "the Olympics are not just the greatest show on earth. They will help to revitalise East London" (BBC, 2003). The decisive selling point of the London 2012 bid was the comprehensive plans for regenerating a large swathe of the capital hitherto afflicted by long-term dereliction. Such plans required significant investment and land remediation. As the candidature file stated, "by staging the Games in this part of the city, the most enduring legacy of the Olympics will be the regeneration of an entire community for the direct benefit of everyone who lives there" (LONDON, 2004, p. 19).

Although London's bid to host the 2012 Summer Games was strongly promoted as being about urban transformation, security concerns were also a central part of the application given London policing's prior experience of dealing with a range of urban threats. In this sense specific Olympic security preparation would be grafted over pre-existing expertise at dealing with the threat of urban terrorism (FUSSEY et al., 2011). For London 2012, the July 7th 2005 bombings, the day after the IOC's decision to

award the 2012 Games to London, was a reminder of the threat the Games would face from terrorist violence, and subsequently led to a massive increase in security budget and prompted Olympic organisers to draw up ever more detailed contingency plans (COAFFEE, 2007).

In the pre-games phase of 2012 Olympic preparation a number of well-documented design intervention have been observed which have wedded urban regeneration to concepts of security and resilience. These interventions are of different sizes and geographical effects ranging from designing protective security into individual venues to pan-London emergency planning, thus reflecting the physical and organisational features of resilience outlined above. A specialist coalition of agencies – the Olympic Security Directorate – has developed detailed security plans based on actuarial and risk-based approaches in order to plan out prospective vulnerabilities as well as enhance the ability of emergency responders to cope in the event of a disruptive event, notably a terrorist attack. Key Olympic sites have been "sealed" with public access heavily restricted. The venues themselves, and their immediate surroundings, have been "protected" with an array of security features that have been designed-into the regenerating urban landscape. This is not only for the purposes of Games-time protection but linked to the desire for a security/safety legacy that follows¹. Here the entire Olympic park area – the site containing the majority of the venues and Athletes village – is to be given "Secure by Design" (SBD)² status in the post-Games period. As the Association of Chief Police Officers noted on award the Olympic Park SBD status:

the award centres on the adoption of design and physical security measures that have been shown to reduce day-to-day crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Whilst the Olympic venues will have significant but discreet security for the period of the Olympics, the application of the SBD project ensures that the general public, residents

¹ As Sinclair (2011) notes, these security features, particularly the electrified fence that encircles the Olympic site, are conspicuously absent in the various computer-generated marketing images produced by London's Olympic authorities.

² SBD Secured by Design (SBD) began in the late 1980s and an award scheme, managed by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and supported by the Home Office, which aims to encourage developers to design space so as to minimise the crime opportunities which they present.

and retailers will enjoy the benefit of a prestigious and safe environment long after the Games have concluded³.

Here, counter-terrorism measures are applied to more prosaic offences in the post-event period. Over recent year's a number of access and control zones have also been established in and around key venues, and London's pre-existing Automated Number Plate Recognition CCTV systems have been adapted and expanded to meet the need of Olympic security organisers (COAFFEE et al., 2011). Moreover, and in relation to attempts to purify Olympic spaces, in advance of such overt securitisation the area surrounding the Olympic Park was subject to the compulsory purchase and then eviction of a number of social housing blocks and local businesses, "clearing them away in the first stage of a longer regeneration process" (RACO; TUNNEY, 2010, p. 14).

Olympic security and its links to the urban transformation taking place in London has however been a fluid and uneven process but is becoming more intense as the 2012 Games draw near. At the time of writing (August 2011), with almost exactly a year until the opening Ceremony, the majority of the security preparations (such as those noted above) have been undertaken or at least put in train. These plans are however undergoing final refinements with new security fears and counter-responses being factored into last-minute preparations. This temporal period is explored in more detail in the next section.

The immediate pre-event phase

The immediate security and resilience planning phase has begun in earnest in London with security preparation seen by many as the top priority in Games preparation. In March 2011 an updated *Olympic and Paralympic Safety and Security Strategy* (HOME OFFICE, 2011a, p. 7) was published which set out the key aims and objectives for the Police and Government, in delivering a safe and secure Olympic Games in just over a year's time. The strategy's overarching aim was "to deliver a safe and secure Games, in keeping with the Olympic culture and spirit" (HOME OFFICE,

2011a, p. 7). This strategy drew off the latest revised UK National Security Strategy; *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The National Security Strategy* published in October 2010 and was to be operationalised in line with the third iteration of the UK's overarching counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST (HM GOVERNMENT, 2011, p. 105). The CONTEST strategy itself specifically focused on the 2012 Games noting that the UK has guaranteed to the IOC that it will to "take all financial, planning and operational measures necessary to guarantee the safety and the peaceful celebration of the Games" (HOME OFFICE, 2011a, p. 3). Specifically it highlighted a set of issues related to the threat and response to possible terrorist attack:

terrorism poses the greatest security threat to the Games. Experience from previous Games and elsewhere indicates that global sporting events provide an attractive and high-profile target for terrorist groups, particularly given the potential for malicious activity to receive enormous international publicity. London 2012 will take place in an unprecedentedly high threat environment. Threat levels can change rapidly but by planning against a threat level of Severe we have maximised our flexibility to respond to a range of threats (HM GOVERNMENT, 2011, p. 106).

Responses to these challenges are being developed through five workstreams, set out below, and contained within the 2012 section of CONTEST. The collective aim is to enhance the resilience of the Games through planning and design guidance (Protect) and related issue of governance, contingency planning and intelligence gathering:

- *protect* Olympic and Paralympic venues, events and supporting transport infrastructure, and those attending and using them;
- *prepare* for events that may significantly disrupt the safety and security of the Games and ensure capabilities are in place to mitigate their impact;
- *identify and disrupt* threats to the safety and security of the Games;

³ See <http://www.securedbydesign.com/news/viewstory.aspx?id=1449&url=http://www.securedbydesign.com/editable_pages/SBD_1296560660316.html>. Access in: 22 jul. 2011.

- *command, control, plan and resource* the safety and security operation; and
- *engage* with international and domestic partners and communities, to enhance our security and ensure the success of our strategy (HM GOVERNMENT, 2011, p. 107).

Given the high profile of the security operation, it was no surprise, therefore, that much international press coverage to celebrate the one year countdown to the London Games was replete with stories highlighting the security infrastructure put, or being put, in place by Olympic managers and security experts. In a media story entitled “Security a top challenge in London in year before Olympics”, the Associated Press (2011b), highlighted both the regeneration and security legacies expected from the Games. Whist noting that “the Olympic park area was changing the face of a previously run down area of east London” and the iconic sporting venues being constructed, it also noted that “underpinning the sports festival will be one of the biggest security operation ever mounted” with security blanketing the English capital (ASSOCIATED PRESS, 2011b).

Although much of the current security planning has focused upon enhancing the resilience of the Olympic venues, non-competition sites are also being closely monitored as the Games draw near. This concern connects to on-going streams of government work in the fields of security and urban planning around the protection of “crowded places” deemed at risk from terrorist groups using innovative and novel methods. These targets of choice – crowded areas – have certain features in common, most notably their easy accessibility that cannot be altered without radically changing citizens’ experience of such largely public places (COAFFEE, 2010b). In the UK, such crowded places are now defined by the Home Office as:

sites [which] are regarded as locations or environments to which members of the public have access that, on the basis of intelligence, credible threat or terrorist methodology, may be considered potentially liable to terrorist attack by virtue of their crowd density [including] bars, pubs and night clubs; restaurants and hotels; shopping centres;

sports and entertainment stadia; cinemas and theatres; visitor attractions; major events; commercial centres; the health sector; the education sector; and religious sites/places of worship (HOME OFFICE, 2009, p. 11).

As the Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police noted when talking about the “soft targets” that terrorists’ might seek out in 2012: “If you secure the venues so the opposition [terrorist] can’t get in, they will look for a soft target like parallel events linked to the Olympics but with less security” (BBC, 2011). Such displacement of terrorist targeting has a long history and is arguably apparent in Eric Rudolph’s decision to attack a crowded commercialised spectator zone rather than the Olympic stadium during the 1996 Atlanta Games.

Whereas traditionally, governmental, financial, critical infrastructure or military targets have been attacked, increasingly urban terrorism is targeted at everyday crowded urban spaces, which are by their very nature difficult to defend. Subsequently this has led to a wave of pre-emptive counter-terrorism interventions being rolled out across London in an attempt to make such spaces more resilient (COAFFEE, 2009a). Such mitigation measures that planners, architects and other built environment professionals have been encouraged to integrate within new and existing buildings and public spaces, have largely been premised upon urban terror attacks that utilise vehicle-borne explosive devices⁴. Such measures range from enhancing the robustness of materials used in construction or in the retrofitting of buildings, limited parking, the enhancement of electronic surveillance capabilities, to the restriction on access to public spaces, particular those surrounding high profile locations, through the use of crash-rated bollards.

However, the very migratory and innovative nature of urban terrorism means that methods of attack change and migrate across international boundaries (CROFT; MOORE, 2010). Notably, recent commando-style attacks against non-western cities – in Mumbai and Lahore in late 2008 and early 2009 respectively – and against soft, unprotected targets internationally, has led to a reassessment of western urban security strategies and an assumption that such terrorist *modus operandi* will migrate to western cities (COAFFEE,

⁴ Much work has also been carried out regarding threats from CBRN and cyber attacks (HM Government 2011).

2009b). Indeed a Mumbai-style attack will be one of the scenarios utilised in the security exercises being carried out by the Olympic security teams in the run up to the 2012 Games (GARDHAM, 2011; see also below). Such fears were confirmed by events in Norway in July 2011 in which over 70 people were killed by a lone gunman⁵. In an interview with the Associated Press, Jacque Rogge, the IOC president, reflected on the Norwegian events and noted that police intelligence, combined with the physical and managerial measures already in place will be crucial to providing a safe and secure Games for London:

it's not just a fence and a wall and the armed patrol [...] It's much more than that. It's intelligence [...] It's not just the physical security of the athlete in the Olympic village [...] It's not just sweeping a bus with mirrors under the floor. There's also the surveillance on the Internet, and the collaboration between different agencies of different countries. There is a lot of intelligence going on (ASSOCIATED PRESS, 2011a).

The British Olympics Minister was also cited in the same article, noting that Olympic security preparations were already making contingency for so-called "lone wolves" but would re-examine its security plans: "Clearly where there are lessons to be learned from Norway we will learn them". Moreover, he noted that: "I am sure as you can possibly be one year out from the games that we have done everything that we need to deliver a safe and secure games" (ASSOCIATED PRESS, 2011a).

Security planning in the immediate pre-games period is therefore evolving to cope with both known threats and those security planners can only envision, but which are being role-played to enhance preparedness (LOS ANGELES TIMES, 2011). With one year to go before the Games began the UK Home Office⁶ released a statement on its website arguing that "we are confident that the right plans are in place to deliver a safe 2012 Games" and that "a programme of security exercises are taking place to test

government, police and other agencies". These exercises are focused upon a range of possible disruptive scenarios but are being continuously tested to "make sure that they are going to operate in the way we anticipate so that when it comes to Games time we're ready and know what to expect" (HOME OFFICE, 2011b). The Home Office had previously announced that they would run at least 10 simulation exercise in order to test security preparations and inter-agency working practices at selected venues (BBC, 2011). This follows on from extensive preparatory work undertaken since London was awarded the right to host the Games (in 2005) by the London Resilience Forum⁷ that was commissioned to scope the extent of Olympic resilience preparedness across agencies in London, and to co-ordinate pan-London resilience activity for the Games (COAFFEE, 2009a).

Learning from such contingency planning attains greater importance in the wake of Government cuts in Police funding which some felt might affect Games-time operations which will see over 12,000 officers needed at peak times. The Home Secretary however noted that "I am confident we have the planning in place to deliver a safe and secure Olympics" (cited in THE DAILY MIRROR, 2011). In July 2011 there were also fears that security preparation would be thrown into chaos by the resignation of The Metropolitan Police Commissioner and Head of Olympic security for 2012, whose professional integrity was questioned in relation the News International phone hacking scandal (LONDON EVENING STANDARD, 2011). The Olympics' Minister however argued that the strategic nature of the security plan already in place, drawing on an emerging international standardisation of mega-sporting event practice (COAFFEE; FUSSEY, 2010), means that any potential social upheaval will not affect overall security preparations.

Panic on the streets of London?

In early August 2011 there were further fears expressed about London's policing capacity to cope

⁵ This attack was combined with a vehicle bomb that exploded in the capital Oslo, killing a number of people and causing widespread damage to the cityscape.

⁶ The Home Office is the lead UK Government department for policies on counter-terrorism, immigration, policing, drugs and crime.

⁷ The Forum is the partnership body that oversees the work of London Resilience and comprises senior representatives from the main emergency organizations and key sectors.

with the wide ranging security demands of hosting the 2012 Games. Following a spate of urban riots and civil disobedience in a number of London boroughs – including the Olympic boroughs of Hackney and Waltham Forest – and the subsequent forced cancellation of high profile sporting fixtures (including a England football international to be staged at Wembley) on police advice, those in charge of security planning for 2012 were forced to reflect upon how they would cope in the event of multiple security breaches and how far this would,

stretch the police manpower on the streets. One leading local government expert was quoted as saying: “You can imagine how stretched the police would be if this were to occur during the Olympics [...] so I think this will create a worry within City Hall and the Home Office (GLOBE; MAIL, 2011).

The urban rioting engulfing London (and other areas of the UK) coincided with an IOC delegation visit to check on logistics ahead of the 2012 Games and a series of “test events” in some Olympic venues. In response the IOC noted that it was confident that the Games would be secure and that this was the responsibility of London authorities:

security at the Olympic Games is a top priority for the IOC. It is however directly handled by the local authorities, as they know best what is appropriate and proportionate. We are confident that they will do a good job in this domain (THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, 2011).

Such sentiments demonstrate the international and domestic forces that impact on the staging of the Olympic Games. Nevertheless, the international community was however less optimistic. The Chinese Government highlighted they had concerns about safety and security ahead of 2012 noting that in the wake of the riots: “The image of London has been severely damaged, leaving people sceptical and worried about the public security situation during the London Olympics” (THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, 2011). London officials also argued in response that were clear that such disorder would not impinge upon 2012 security and that such disturbances had already been factored into their contingency planning:

public disorder is one of those risks which we have already been planning against [...] obviously in light of the appalling events in London over recent days, we will review our planning to ensure that any lessons are identified (THE GUARDIAN, 2011).

As the Games draw near, increased importance is also being placed upon balancing the needs of safety with requirement of ensuring such securitisation does not get in the way of the sporting spectacle or “spirit” of the Games. The Associated Press (2011b) noted a renewed emphasis by organisers on ensuring security is not overwhelming, citing the example of the Royal Wedding on April 29th 2011 in London as an example of where a million people lined the procession route without any overly obtrusive security presence. As the organising committee leader, former Olympian Sebastian Coe noted, “We’re very good at policing in a discrete way [...] the real challenge is to maintain security to protect athletes, protect people, protect asset, but at the same time having people leaving your city feeling they haven’t been pushed from pillar to post” (THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 2011b).

Yet at the same time, it can be argued that hosting a Royal Wedding and an Olympic Games, although both constituting significant events, hold different policing and security demands. Most obvious here are the temporal differences between the events. In addition, despite aspirations (or public claims) for unobtrusive policing during Olympic and other sporting mega-events, intensive and visible zero-tolerance style policing strategies have been a common reality of these occasions. As Fussey et al. (2011) noted in advance of these latest riots, more intensive policing strategies have historically encountered significant resistance from the capital’s youth, most notably ahead of the Brixton (1981) and Tottenham, Broadwater Farm (1985) riots. Whilst considerable differences exist between the urban disorders of 1980s London and the events of 2011, there are significant issues at play. In the first instance, something that both the government enquiries into the Brixton and Broadwater Farm riots of the 1980s (SCARMAN, 1981; GIFFORD, 1986, respectively) and the criminological literature on policing (itself informed by Habermas’ (1976) concept of the “legitimation crisis”) share is an accent on the importance of the legitimacy of policing institutions and their representativeness of the communities they police. Not only are such relationships between the

police and the capital's youth particularly strained in the run up to the 2012 Games (which are hosted in neighbourhoods with some of the highest proportion of young people in the country), such tensions exist against a background of recession and austerity, factors long recognised as incendiary catalysts for urban disorder (*inter alia* BENYON; SOLOMOS, 1987). As Lord Scarman noted in his largely astute and report into the Brixton riots, intensive policing during such times "The police do not create social deprivation, though unimaginative, inflexible policing can make the tensions which deprivation engenders greatly worse" (SCARMAN, 1981, p. 157).

The ultimate aim for "customer-sensitive" security to prevail which will provide the highest possible levels of security without having to "lock down" the entire city, as has happened at other Olympiads where sterile environments were created to facilitate enhanced security (COAFFEE et al., 2011). The Los Angeles Times (2011), for example, noted security measures in Beijing which "discouraged public gathering and involved a force of more than 100,000 creating an oppressive atmosphere". By contrast they focus on the London 2012 official website which pledges to "build on the United Kingdom's practice of discrete and effective security, while remaining in keeping with the spirit and culture of the Games" (THE LOS ANGELES TIMES 2011).

Planned legacy and policy transfer

The designing-in of counter-terrorism features to Olympic venues and other public spaces in the city requires knowledge of how built environment professionals, alongside security specialists, can actively contribute the longer-term regeneration vision for the area. In the case of London, organisers have produced the most comprehensive plans seen for urban regeneration and security in modern Olympic history. The merging of these agendas in a host of *permanent* design and architectural features, and within systems for managing emergencies, has been widespread. In previous host Olympic cities such features have been largely *temporary* (COAFFEE; FUSSEY, 2010).

In its development of secure regeneration spaces, London's built environment community is creating a planning "blueprint" for knowledge transfer across the globe for when mega-events come to town. Such

legacies are conceptual as well as physical. The intended "permanence" of security infrastructure is readily being transferred to other "host" cities, indicating a degree of policy learning and transfer. The aforementioned revised UK CONTEST strategy (HM GOVERNMENT, 2011) highlights explicitly how lessons from the 2012 security operation will be fed back into resilience planning for the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games. Moreover, the UK's Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO, 2011) has also highlighted how safety and security principles are being embedded within the ongoing regeneration and build standards underway in Glasgow:

for the overall success of the Games it is vital that security measures can be embedded throughout the entire process from design, through build, to delivery of the event itself and onto the legacy. Early awareness and consideration of security issues and requirements will also contribute to the long term success and sustainability of the new communities created.

The intention of the Scottish Police Service is to afford Secured by Design accreditation to the Commonwealth Games Village, designed to accommodate 7,500 competitors and 1,500 officials. All venues and Games sites, be they existing structures or new builds, have been securitised for security risk and aligned where possible with designing-out crime standards (ACPO, 2011).

In relation to the Olympics, Rio's successful candidacy to host the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games also draws on these continuities of mega-event security. Although security practices are likely to be prioritised towards localised criminality rather than international terrorism (Rio, 2016, 2007), security is likely to be a major concern for Rio's organising committee (COAFFEE; FUSSEY, 2010). These concerns can be more specifically related to the city's murder rate (that annually stands at triple that of the entire UK), and fears of theft against tourists. Such issues are likely to elevate the attention afforded to security. To mitigate these risks a familiar plan is being formulated to that being developed in London building on the principles of perimeter security, technological surveillance, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles and intensified policing strategies (Rio, 2016, 2007).

Such “solutions” couple required Olympic security standards with Rio’s tradition of delineating “high-value” spaces from their urban context through crime prevention measures (COY, 2006) and reinforce the risk of further splintering of Rio’s divided landscape, providing a significant challenge to its regenerative aspirations. Indeed recent visits to Brazil by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, intended to allow the UK security industry “to pursue commercial opportunities and become the partner of choice for sport security” has reported that: Brazil sees a step change in the security situation in Rio as a legacy of the Olympic Games in 2016 in particular and is making progress on sustainable “pacification” of favelas (FCO, 2011).

Overall, the emerging blueprint for would-be host cities of sporting mega-events incorporates a strong element of both urban rejuvenation and securitisation which are increasingly being combined into resilient designs and master plans. Without a commitment to such strategies individual cities and nations are unlikely to be given the opportunity to host such events in the future. The legacy of the coupling of regeneration and security concerns within cities that have, or are about to host such events, is evident both as material and design changes within the built environment alongside greater surveillance and emergency response capabilities. This is a trend that has been steadily growing since the wake of the terrorist attacks in Munich in 1972 through international networks which have been evolving a standardised approach to security, albeit one that is shaped locally to a great extent, and one which is likely to reach its zenith through the resilient planning put in place for London 2012 where security features are being made permanent and embedded seamlessly with urban regeneration plans.

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